SUBJECTS.

every likelihood of the urgent works being discriminated and attended to.

Dewan's reply.—The views of the Member are noted.

41. *Annual provision of funds for irrigation works.*

Mr. T. Kesava Pillai (Member, Neyyatinkara Taluk) said that the taluk, which he represented, contributed a large increase of revenue to the State as a result of the settlement. Still, in the matter of irrigation works, it had been allowed to remain in a backward condition all along. Till the year 1074, a sum of about Rs. 5,000 used to be annually allotted for the taluk. But, after that year, no irrigation work was done in the taluk. He said that, if the Kodayar Right Bank Channel were cut as far as possible, it would afford great relief to the ryots, but till that was done, a reasonable amount should be provided in the budget every year for the improvement of the existing canals and irrigation tanks in the taluk.

Dewan's reply.—The views of the Member are noted.

V.—Revenue and Finance.

42. *Reduction of the export duty on copra.*

Mr. Devan Krishnan Karthavu (Member, Shertallay Taluk) said that, under the Notification dated 10th June 1907, the export duty on copra was raised, as a tentative measure for three years, from 1st Mithunam 1082. As the price of cocoanuts had considerably fallen since then, he requested that the duty on the article might be reduced.

Dewan's reply.—Till the expiry of the tentative period of three years, the question cannot be considered.

43. *Sale of impure salt at cost price for purposes of manure.*

Mr. Raman Karunakaran (Member, Parur Taluk) said that experience showed that ordinary salt, if applied to the roots of cocoanut trees, acted as good manure. But it was difficult for the people to purchase large quantities of salt at the price at which it was being sold, for the purpose of using it as manure. In the allams where salt was manufactured, a good quantity of impure salt was at present being thrown out as not useful for any purpose. He suggested that it would be an encouragement to the cocoanut industry, if arrangements could be made for the sale of the impure salt at cost price to the cocoanut cultivators from all the bankshalls where common salt was sold. The only objection that could be raised to the proposal was the possible consumption of the impure salt by people and the consequent loss of reve-

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

SUBJECTS.

nue to the State; but the difficutly could be obviated, if the Director of Agriculture would suggest some means by which the article could be rendered unfit for human consumption, without at the same time impairing its virtue as a manure.

Dewan's reply.—The question is an important one. On the one hand, Government are anxious to improve cocoanut cultivation by allowing the owners of cocoanut gardens to get the salt required by them for manure at cost price. At the same time, there is the practically insuperable obstacle that salt given at cost price for agricultural purposes may go into human consumption. That would be to the serious prejudice of the salt revenue. The Peishkar of the Kottayam division, the Excise Commissioner and the Director of Agriculture would be asked to meet and discuss the whole question in consultation with some of the leading ryots and to report thereon.

General interests of the trade of Alleppey.

Mr. G. H. Davey of Alleppey (Member, Nominated) observed that Alleppey's claim to be the principal port of Travancore and the centre of several large industries and manufactures would be admitted on all hands and that it would be rendered manifest by the very circumstance of the place being the headquarters of a large commerical community doing business with all parts of the world. Trade had greatly developed of recent years and begun to draw steamers of large direct lines from Europe and America. But owing to the receding of the sea during the past two years, the port had suffered considerably. He was aware that a new pier had been sanctioned by Government, but it was out of the question that the work could be completed before 1910 or 1911. He feared therefore that, in the interval, much of the trade would inevitably be diverted to Cochin. He contended that, during the past twenty years, the shipping of the world had been gradually changing from sailing vessels to steamers and that the facilities of the port, which were adequate enough in the days of sailing vessels, were altogether inadequate for steamers. A sailing vessel would remain in port for 20 or 30 days to load 800 to 1,000 tons of cargo, but a steamer would not call at the port unless she could secure 250 to 400 tons in a single day. If Government were desirous therefore of fostering and expanding the trade of Alleppey, he said that it was necessary to study the requirements which would safeguard the interests of both the Government as well as the merchants. In view of the fact that Government themselves considered it necessary to maintain a Port Officer for that purpose and that since the abolition of that office the port had suffered much, he would urge on Government

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly